

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 and 19-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 12 is amended. Claims 1-11 and 13-16 have been withdrawn from consideration. However, upon allowance of claim 12, dependent claims 13-16 should be rejoined and allowed.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 12 and 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 2001-18235 to Tanaka et al. (hereinafter "Tanaka") in view of USP 2,756,460 to Heintz and further in view of JP 5-138656 (hereinafter "JP 656").

Neither Tanaka, Heintz nor JP 656 provide a slit-like aperture having a depth within a range of 0.1 mm to 2 mm, as in the invention of amended independent claim 12. This feature is not addressed by the August 12 Office Action. Although, Tanaka discloses the depth V of the gap 17 can be in the range of 1 to 2 mm, this does not relate to the slit like apertures.

Furthermore, none of the applied references disclose that the slit like aperture are arranged near a junction of the ridges, as in amended independent claim 12. See e.g., Fig. 15. The arrangement of the slit like aperture near a junction of the ridges addresses a problem that air tends to stagnate near the junctions and cannot be effectively discharged out of the mold cavity even when a clearance is provided in the molding surface, particularly when the junction is remote from an end surface of the mold piece.

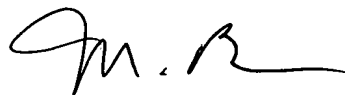
The Office Action recognizes that JP 235 does not disclose the fine slit like apertures. Furthermore, the apertures of Heintz, Jr. in JP 656 are arranged substantially at a widthwise center position of the land portion.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: January 12, 2005

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